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# SECTS AND DEATH

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Behind-ForeEverAfterword:

I postulate that the function of art and all creative thought is to make us aware of what we know and don't know that we know. You can't tell anybody anything he doesn't know already. Like those folks living on the sea coast in the Middle Ages, watching those ships come in mast first year after year-then Galileo wises them up and they are ready to burn him as an egghead deviant. But they cool it out over the years and finally have to admit: "It's round, boys, it's round. We knew it all along." Cezanne showed the viewer objects seen from a certain angle in a certain light and they attacked his canvases with umbrellas at the first exhibition. Well, that doesn't happen any more and any child would recognize the objects in a Cezanne canvas. Joyce made readers aware of their own stream of consciousness and was accused of promulgating a cult of unintelligibility.

If the function of art is to make us aware of what we know and don't know we know, the function of the Christian Church and all its metastases has been and still is to keep us in ignorance of what we know. People living on the sea coast knew the earth was round. They believed it was flat because the Church said so. And hard-core Synanon members still believe the media put that rattlesnake in Paul Morantz' mail box to discredit Synanon. Is there any limit to brainwashing? Apparently not. Such cults as Synanon, Scientology, the Peoples Temple derive from the same infected source as Christianity. In fact they recapitulate the story of Christianity word for word, like the inevitable course of some unsightly disease: criminal ignorance, brutish stupidity, self-righteous bigotry, paranoid fear of outsiders. For the cultist, psychiatrists, the media, Government agencies have become Satan incarnate. Like the fundamental Christians, they have to be **right**.

Now Christianity sounded good at first to the naive convert. Love, peace and charity-what's wrong with that? I'll tell you what's wrong-a series of unprecedented horrors perpetrated by so-called Christians: the Inquisition, the Conquistadores, the American Indian wars, slavery, Hiroshima and the present-day Bible Belt. That poisonous old-time religion they brew up down there constitutes a menace to all passengers on spacecraft Earth. Why did this happen, and why does it happen with the sects that stem from Christianity? What was so wrong with Christianity in the beginning? In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God.

There's an interesting book entitled **The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind**. The author, Julian Jaynes, postulates that the awe in which the ancient priest-king was held derived from his ability to produce his voice in the brains of his loyal subjects. This is the voice of God, which funnels through the non-dominant brain hemisphere. Jaynes cites clinical evidence; stimulation of the nondominant hemisphere causes experimental subjects to hear voices. An attempted suicide who was rescued from drowning stated that a voice in his head told him to kill himself, and that for some reason he **had to obey that voice**. If you want to start a cult, the first step is to get your voice into the non-dominant brain hemisphere of your soon-to-be devoted followers. The Scientology course involves listening to hours off. Ron Hubbard's voice on tape. The voice of Dederich, founder of Synanon, was said to drift from the air conditioning system, and Reverend Jim Jones had tapes of his voice continually broadcast over loudspeakers at Jonestown.

The second step: make enemies. If there is one thing a cult leader needs, it is enemy-real or imagined-from which to deliver his flock. Having postulated fiendish enemies, the leader then sets up commando squads to deal with this self-created emergency: the Sea Org of Scientology, the Imperial Marines of Synanon, the armed guards of the Peoples Temple. Aggressive acts by these protectors then produce counter-actions from outside. After all, what can you expect when you break into Government offices, put rattlesnakes in people's mail boxes, and murder a Congressman? These counterattacks, which the cultists bring on themselves, lead to escalating paranoia and more and more extreme measures.

Given the ability to project your voice into others' minds, here is a how-to blueprint:

ACT, the Anti-Cancer Temple, was founded by Tobias Antony Crump, a self-styled minister of the Radiant Church of Regenerate Christ. He leased an abandoned resort hotel in upstate New York where he offered for a reasonable fee to cure people of the smoking habit in seven days. The cure was effected by suggestions implanted in what he called "the other mind." The suggestions were administered through headphones which his parishioners were required to wear day and night throughout the seven days of the cure. At the end of this time all the reborn parishioners decided to stay on at the Temple and work for ACT. In return for the privilege of becoming ACTers they were required to turn over ten percent of their assets to ACT.

Crump prospered and expanded his facilities. More and more pressure was put on cured parishioners to stay on after completing the no-smoking course. They were told that the cure was not yet complete. If they returned to their old haunts they would inevitably relapse and die of cancer in a few years. Besides they had a sacred duty to help others. Cancer, he taught, was a Venusian plot to take over the planet. Aliens were landing in cancerous tissues as invisible parasites who were invading minds and bodies in all walks of life. Reverend Crump published a weekly tabloid in which he launched preposterous charges against all the enemies of ACT, a list that now included the tobacco companies, the drug companies, the FDA, the World Health Organization, the Cancer Research Society, the FBI, the CIA, the media, Interpol, the IRS, the Communist Party. A typical cartoon showed Uncle Sam hit in the face by a mass of cancerous putrescence like a custard pie: "From Russia With Love."

When a bomb partially destroyed an outbuilding of the Temple, Crump declared a state of absolute emergency. His followers must now turn over half their worldly goods and all their time to ACT. He declared all-out war on his Satanic adversaries. When an investigative reporter, sent to get the story on ACT, disappeared under mysterious circumstances, the founder proclaimed that the subsequent investigation "clearly and unequivocally proves a ten-year conspiracy on the part of Government agencies acting in concert with the media to suppress a Church."

Reverend Crump was involved in countless lawsuits bringing action against any critics of ACT. The resulting expenses were more than compensated by the constant influx of money with which he bought real estate. He now owned huge tracts of land in Florida, New Hampshire, East Texas and Montana where he set up Temples for his followers, who now numbered in the hundreds of thousands. He taught that they must all merge into one organism through what he called biologic fusion. Only in this way could they counter the Venusian vims which was taking over the rest of the world. To foster biologic fusion there were bizarre mass sex orgies and nudity feasts to break down residual resistance and let in the radiant light of Christ. He instituted Black Broadcasts, in which his followers gathered at synchronized times to concentrate in silent malevolence on the enemies of the week, whose names, addresses and pictures appeared on a screen. His followers were now required to turn over all their possessions to ACT, and were told that they must be ready to offer their life-blood if necessary. Desertion was made a crime punishable by death. There was continual practice in the martial arts, and the bestial howls and grunts and snarls could be heard for miles around. Any neighbor who complained was put on the enemy list.

Crump boasted that he had only to lift his hand to dispatch his followers as one manonkamikaze missions of assassination and sabotage. He was rumored to have in readiness nuclear devices and enough nerve gas to blanket the East Coast. "He could knock the Government ofthis country down like a house of cards," a highly placed official stated flatly.

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Richard Nixon exploded the Presidential image at Watergate. I think he will go down in history as a folk hero. The Reverend Jones has, by his example, called into question the leadership principle which is the very basis of authority. What else are churches, armies, nations built upon but leaders and the belief that these leaders know what they are doing and that the citizen owes them unquestioning obedience?

Anyone who believes he owns all the answers is a lunatic. And lunatics are dangerous to themselves and others. Spacecraft Earth is too small and too overcrowded to accommodate lunatic sects. The answer is very simple: instead of being tax-free, churches should be taxed double. They should be taxed right out of existence.

